

PROJECT CENSORED 1996

Project Censored is a media analysis and research program based out of Sonoma State University, California. Its stated goal is to "explore and publicise the extent of censorship in our society by locating stories about significant issues of which the public should be aware, but is not, for one reason or another."

Following are the 10 most censored stories for 1996, according to Project Censored:

#1: Risking the World: Nuclear Proliferation in Space

While much press coverage was devoted to the failed Russian space probe that crashed into the South Pacific in November 1996—along with its payload of 200 grams of plutonium-238—virtually no attention has been paid to the 1997 launch of NASA's *Cassini* probe which will be carrying 72 pounds of the same deadly substance.

The plutonium in the *Cassini* probe will sit atop a Lockheed Martin-built Titan IV rocket, which has been involved in a series of mishaps including a 1993 explosion which destroyed a US\$1 billion spy satellite system and sent fragments falling into the Pacific Ocean.



#2: Shell's Oil, Africa's Blood

In the wake of Nigeria's execution of nine environmental activists, including Nobel Prize winner and leader of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ken Saro-Wiwa, evidence has indicated that the Shell oil company has fomented civil unrest in Nigeria, contributed to unfair trials and failed to use its leverage to prevent the unjustified executions.

The executed activists were involved in massive protests against Royal Dutch Shell

Group because of the environmental devastation it has caused—particularly in southern Nigeria's Ogoniland.

Since the executions, Shell has also managed to keep the United States media from informing the public of its actions.

#3: Big Perks for the Wealthy Hidden in Minimum Wage Bill

On 20 August 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, ostensibly geared to aid small business owners and their employees. The publicised intent of the bill was to raise the minimum wage from US\$4.25 to \$5.15 an hour.

However, according to John Judis, senior editor of the *New Republic*, the minimum wage bill included at least 10 other significant provisions aimed at neither small business owners nor their employees. Indeed, Judis charges, these unpublicised provisions may negate whatever good the bill may do.

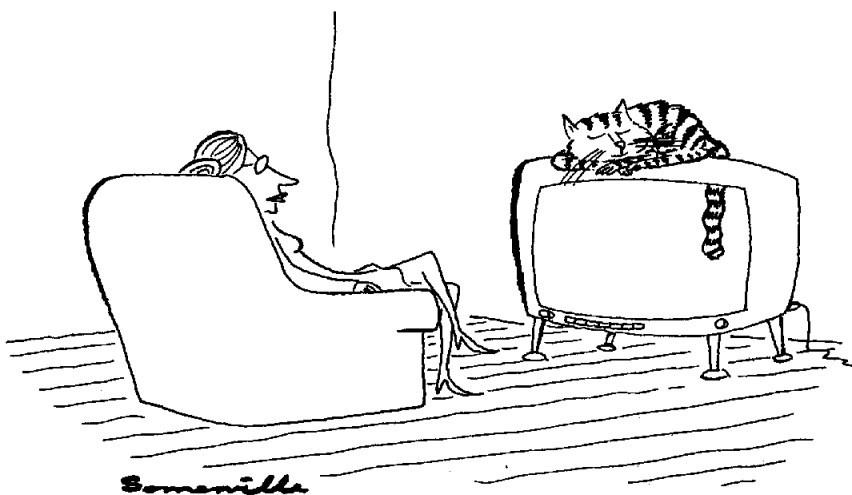
#4: Deforming Consent: The PR Industry's Secret War on Activists

Exposed are the multi-million-dollar clients of major public relations firms that are behind the creation of false non-profit organisations which target activists and proposed legislation that threaten big business. Most of these organisations focus on environmental, consumer and labour issues. The strategies of these powerful media manipulators include the defamation of activists and their ideas and the deception of American citizens.

Through the PR industry and the enormous financial resources of their corporate clients, these organisations mobilise private detectives, lawyers and undercover spies; influence editorial and news decisions; launch phony 'grassroots' campaigns; and use high-tech information systems to influence and manipulate public opinion and policy. With its array of sophisticated, persuasive weaponry, the PR industry can out-manoeuvre, overpower and outlast citizen reformers.

#5: White-Collar Crime: Whitewash at the Department of Justice

While white-collar crime costs America 10 to 50 times more money than street



crime, the Department of Justice (DoJ) continues to show little interest in taking the problem seriously.

Based on the centralised records maintained by the DoJ, the data shows that when it comes to white-collar crime, the federal government almost never brings criminal charges against businesses. Of the more than 51,000 federal criminal indictments in 1994, only 250—less than one-half of one per cent—involved criminal violations of the nation's environmental, occupational health and safety, and consumer product-safety laws.

Given the huge number of corporations, the private admissions by business lawyers that their organisations often break the law, and a well-documented record of repeated violations, the minuscule number of federal criminal allegations hardly squares with the corporate view of business as the victim of a federal government run amok.

#6: New Mega-Merged Banking Behemoths = Big Risk

1995 was a record year for bank mergers. Chase Manhattan and Chemical Bank combined to create the nation's largest bank, with US\$300 billion in assets; while on the west coast, the merger of First Interstate and Wells Fargo created a new giant with over US\$100 billion in assets.

The massive consolidation of the nation's banking resources has resulted in 71.5 per cent of US banking assets being controlled by the 100 largest banking organisations, representing less than one per cent of the total banks in the nation.

Studies have found that banks in concentrated markets tend to charge higher rates for certain types of loans, and tend to offer lower interest rates on certain types of deposits than do banks in less concentrated markets.

#7: Cashing in on Poverty

Corporate America is in the poverty business and making huge profits from the destitute in the United States. Sixty million poor people without bank accounts or access to competitive-rate loans must instead use pawn shops, check-cashing outlets, rent-to-own stores, finance companies and high-interest mortgage lenders.

These businesses generate yearly revenues of US\$200 to \$300 billion and are increasingly owned or subsidised by Wall Street giants such as American Express, Bank America, Citibank, Ford, NationsBank and Western Union.

While affluent credit-card holders can pay as little as six to eight per cent annual interest, low-income people are paying as much as 240 per cent for a loan from a pawnbroker, 300 per cent for a finance company loan, and even an amazing 2,000 per cent for a fast 'payday' loan from a check-cashing outlet.

#8: Big Brother Goes High-Tech

Information on individuals in the developed world can now be obtained by governments and corporations using new surveillance, identification and networking technologies. These new technologies are rapidly facilitating the mass and routine surveillance of large segments of the population—without the need for warrants and formal investigations.

In Britain, nearly all public areas are monitored by over 150,000 closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV). Equipped with a powerful zoom lens, each camera can read the wording on a cigarette packet at 100 yards. These cameras can track individuals wherever they go—even within buildings.

The FBI has developed miniaturised CCTV units that it can put into a "lamp, clock, radio, duffel bag, purse, picture frame, utility pole, coin telephone and other [objects]" and then control remotely

to "pan, tilt, zoom and focus".

Another type of surveillance camera currently in development boasts the equivalent of X-ray vision and can penetrate clothing to 'see' concealed weapons, plastic explosives or drugs. Known as the passive millimetre wave imager, it can also see through walls and detect activity.

Other emerging fields of surveillance include intelligent transportation systems (ITS) which track the movements of all people using public or private transport. Such systems are linked to ordinary bank accounts and can generate records that show a driver's name and address and the exact time and place where tolls have been charged.

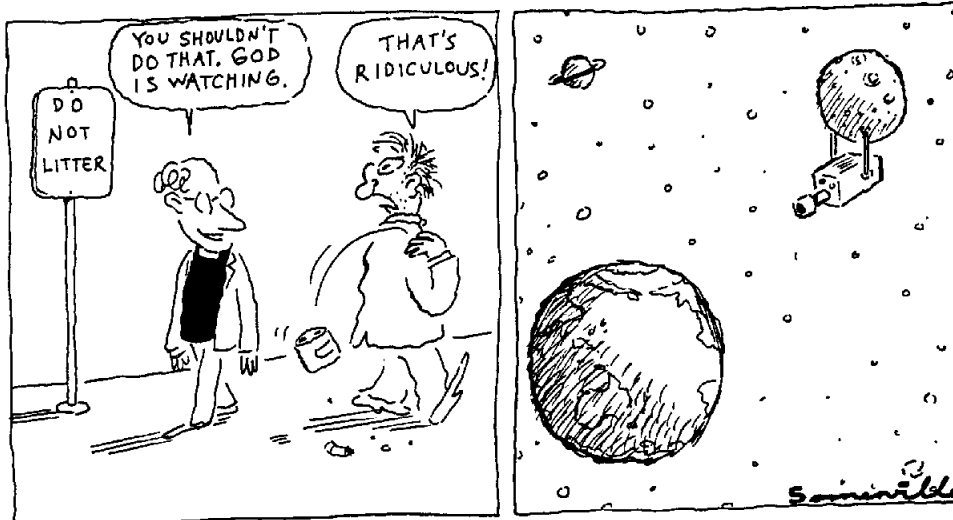
Nine states in the US already use similar systems to track over 250,000 vehicles every day, and 12 more states will soon put their own systems on line.

#9: US Troops Exposed to Depleted Uranium During Gulf War

Depleted uranium (DU) weapons were used for the first time in a war situation in the Persian Gulf in 1991 and were hailed as a new and incredibly effective weapon by the Department of Defense (DoD).

Although army training manuals were written in the 1980s to warn tank crews and commanders of the dangers associated with DU rounds, the Pentagon failed to warn Gulf War troops of the dangers.

The DoD did circulate a memo to Gulf War commanders that contained three key points: any vehicle or system struck by a DU penetrator can be assumed to be conta-



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minated; personnel should avoid entering contaminated areas; and, if troops must enter contaminated areas, they should wear protective clothing.

Unfortunately, this memo was written on 7 March 1991, eight days after the firing of weapons ceased in the Persian Gulf.

#10: World Facing Food Scarcity

The Japanese Ministry of Agriculture released projections in late December 1995 which show a doubling of world grain prices by 2010. The world prices for wheat and rice will exceed twice that of the base year of 1992.

Around the same time, World Watch published an article, "Facing Food Scarcity", which supports the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture claim. According to the World Agricultural Outlook Board, the world's stocks of rice, wheat, corn and other grains have fallen to their lowest levels in two decades.

The food shortage will become even more acute in light of the conclusions of the recent World Food Summit in November 1996. Convened by the FAO, the first summit in 22 years decided that poor countries will be responsible for feeding their own people, without the aid of wealthier nations.

(Source: *Project Censored Web Page*: <http://censored.sonoma.edu/projectcensored/Stories1996.html>)

NON-POLLUTED PET FOOD

In NEXUS 4/01 we published an article entitled "Polluted Pet Food". To the readers who complained about the lack of alternatives, we suggest that they (and their pets) try the recipes below:

Dog Food:

500 grams minced beef (not lean); 2 hard-boiled eggs; 4 cups boiled rice; 6 slices crumbed bread; 2 tsp calcium carbonate (crushed antacid tablets). Cook meat in covered pan until brown; keep fat. Mix well with remaining ingredients. If too dry, add water (not milk). Makes about 1.5kg. Keep in covered container in fridge.

Dog Biscuits:

1-1½ cups of dog food recipe; 1 cup unprocessed bran; 1 cup uncooked oatmeal; ½ cup vegetable oil. Preheat oven to 120°C (248°F). Mash dog food in bowl. Mix in bran and oatmeal. Slowly add oil, mixing in more or less oil until mixture can be moulded into patties or bone shapes. Bake for 3½ hours. Cool; store in airtight tin. Will keep one month in fridge. Makes 16 to 20 biscuits.

Cat Food:

1.25 kg cooked and minced chicken or beef liver; 2 cups cooked rice; 2 tbsp vegetable oil; 2 tsp calcium carbonate (crushed antacid tablets). Mix all in medium bowl. Will keep in fridge for five days, well covered; or three months frozen.

(Source: *Grassroots Magazine*, no. 116)

VET THREATENED OVER PET FOOD DANGER CLAIM

A vet who claims that processed canned and dried pet food is ruining cats' and dogs' health is being threatened with deregistration if he doesn't shut up.

Dr Tom Lonsdale has been accused of professional misconduct by the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) for voicing his concerns over increasing links between the AVA and the pet food industry.

Dr Lonsdale, a representative of the Raw Meaty Bone Lobby, claims that commercial pet food is helping cause an AIDS-like immune disorder in dogs and cats.

The lobby claims an "unholy alliance" between the veterinary profession and the lucrative pet food industry has developed, with vets promoting manufactured foods instead of natural foods in their surgeries.

Among the evidence cited by the lobby is the Pet PEP package prepared by the AVA for distribution to schools to promote "responsible" pet ownership.

The program was 18 per cent funded by the Petcare Information and Advisory Service, which is in turn funded by Uncle Ben's, the dominant company in the AUD\$700 million-a-year pet food industry.

If found guilty of misconduct, Dr Lonsdale could be struck off the veterinary register and banned from vet practice.

(Source: *The Sun Herald*, 16 March 1997)

OZONE THERAPY UPDATE

Despite the best attempts of the gay lobby and the medical profession in Australia to kill off any credibility pertaining to ozone/oxygen therapy, reports continue to surface about people who have successfully treated AIDS and cancer with various forms of oxygenation.

As we continue to receive calls from people all around the world asking where the best treatment centre for this modality can be found, it was with some relief that we spotted the following recommendation in an oxygen therapy discussion group on the Internet. Ed.

Comments on Oxygen Therapy

by Joseph Passero

I have attended every major ozone congress since 1993: San Francisco, USA, and Baden Baden, Germany, in 1993; Zürich, Switzerland, in 1994; Lille, France, and Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, in 1995; Baden Baden, Germany; Medica 96 in Düsseldorf, Germany, and Brussels, Belgium, in 1996; and, most recently, Havana, Cuba, in 1997.

Near-death experience



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I have also visited both private and public clinics and hospitals in all those countries.

I am the person responsible for starting the three ozone treatment centres that are on the oxytherapy list in the state of New York, USA. I still do work at two of them, performing approx. 50 to 70 major auto-haemotherapy treatments a week.

I was also responsible for the Medical Society for Ozone Therapy of Germany presenting the ozone therapy courses in English in 1993, 1994 and 1995.

The Ozone Research Center in Cuba is, in my opinion, the best that I have seen in the world for medical ozone treatment and ozone research, both medical and industrial. If I were looking for medical treatment, it is the first place I would consider. Contact details are as follows:

Ozone Research Center
15 Ave & 230 St #1313, Sibony, Playa, or
PO Box 6880, C. Havana, Cuba
Phone: (537) 787 4141; Fax: (537) 21 0233
E-mail: ozone@infomed.sld.cu

(Source: *Joseph Passero*, 13 April 1997,

e-mail: jp@spacelab.net, via the Internet

Oxygen Therapy discussion group:

list@oxytherapy.com)

BIG BUSINESS TO RUN SMALL COUNTRIES?

A British think tank has proposed that multinational corporations "privatise" economically troubled countries. In the journal of London's Institute of Economic Affairs, Robert Whelan criticised foreign aid programs, arguing that "cash grants to Africa" only create "wealthy dictators".

Under Whelan's plan, the world's biggest companies would bid for leases to operate third world countries for up to 21 years, in exchange for an agreed-upon return on the earnings. Whelan says, "it might at least be worth a try", but Oxfam Africa's Kevin Watkins sniffs that, "if they knew their history, they would know that this has been tried before." It's called imperialism!

(Source: *Earth Island Journal*, Winter 1996-97)

WOMEN UNITE TO SUE HRT DRUG MANUFACTURERS

In a landmark case in the UK, a group of 15 women who claim to have suffered serious side-effects through taking hormone replacement therapy (HRT) are attempting to sue the manufacturers of the drugs.

If the 15 women who have applied for

legal aid are successful, the class action is expected to lead to a flood of similar claims for damages.

HRT is prescribed to one in three British women in their 50s for menopausal symptoms (such as hot flushes and a reduction in bone strength) caused by a loss of oestrogen. But recent research has shown that in the first year of treatment, women taking HRT are four times as likely to suffer from deep vein thrombosis, leaving their legs permanently swollen, and life-threatening blood clots in the lungs.

Rosalie Houghton, a Hereford solicitor handling the cases of several claimants, says she has a coroner's certificate where HRT has been cited as a secondary cause of death in one case.

(Source: *The Sunday Telegraph* [UK], 23 March 1997)

THE WRISTWATCH YOU WEAR IN YOUR WRIST

Conspiracy theorists will love this one! Scientists are testing a revolutionary watch which can be implanted beneath the skin of the wrist. The device, expected to be on sale within three years, would be inserted in a cheap and relatively painless procedure at an outpatients clinic. Because skin is partially transparent, the watch's time and date display would show through.

The invention, under development at computer company Interval Research in California, uses a liquid crystal display built into a thin film of plastic and sealed with a protective layer. It is controlled by a

microchip and powered by a small battery which is also implanted under the skin's surface. The battery is recharged by placing the wrist next to an inductive recharger.

The watch would be smart enough to know when to reset itself for time changes, but, if necessary, its setting could be altered via remote control.

Researchers believe the same technology could be used to create a range of electronic tags for criminals, and could be adapted to record medical information such as blood temperature and pressure.

Prototypes of the watch are reportedly already being tested. The mind boggles!

(Source: *Daily Mail* [UK], 29 March 1997)

BIG BROTHER CAR CONTROL

The NRMA motorists' group is ready to launch a satellite-controlled road service: a Big Brother 'eye in the sky' that can unlock car doors by remote control and deliver assistance at the push of a button.

Called "StarTrack", when fitted to members' cars it will provide satellite tracking services using the Global Positioning System (GPS). With installation costs at A\$1,245, it will deliver a range of features, e.g., locating your stolen car and disabling its engine, or giving advance warning that your battery is almost flat. "StarTrack" also provides safety precautions such as a 'panic button', which, when pressed, alerts an operator that emergency help is needed.

(Source: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 May 1997)

